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Concert: Ithaca College Women's Chorale

Ithaca College Women's Chorale

Janet Galvan

Elizabeth Swanson

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ITHACA COLLEGE
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

ITHACA COLLEGE WOMEN'S CHORALE

Janet Galván, conductor
Elizabeth Swanson, graduate conductor

FORD HALL
TUESDAY, APRIL 20, 2004
8:15 P.M.

ITHACA

PROGRAM

All That You Hold

Glenn McClure

Tiffany Desmond, flute

Four Russian Peasant Songs

Igor Stravinsky

1. *Near the Savior's Church in Chigisy*
2. *Ovsen*
3. *The Pike*
4. *Fatso*

Tyler Ogilvie, Carlie Kilgore, Leah Jones,
Jenna Troiano, French horns
Alexandra Loutsion and Sarah Tree, soloists

Canticle

Francisco Núñez

Lauren Ash-Morgan, soloist

A Child Said

James McCray

Chris Neske, oboe

Nigra Sum

Pablo Casals

O Trenzinho

Hector Villa Lobos

Laura Bilodeau, Jennie Herreid,
Cayenna Ponchione, Laurie Sklar, percussionists

She Shall Have Music

Nick Page

Senior Members of the Ensemble

Amazing Grace

Arr. Francisco Núñez

Alison Holst Grubbe, Yolanda Payne,
Stephanie Lauricella, soloists
Cookie Coogan, faculty guest solist

Las Amarillas

Stephen Hatfield

Blessing

Katie Moran Bart

A special thank you to Dimitri V. Shapovalov,
Anna Sagdeeva, and Angela Cohen.

PROGRAM NOTES

All That You Hold by Glenn McClure is a text by St. Clare of Assisi. This is one portion of a letter written by St. Clare of Assisi to the Blessed Agnes of Prague. Clare, the co-founder of the Franciscan Order along with Francis of Assisi, wrote this letter to Agnes who was struggling with preserving her faith in the midst of political, social, and religious upheaval in Prague in the early 13th century. These words of encouragement were meant to strengthen Agnes' resolve in holding on to those ideas, practices, and beliefs that were being challenged by outside forces. Many similar letters by Clare exist. The Franciscan order grew rapidly both during Francis' life time and soon afterward. The Franciscan ideals of simplicity, poverty, and charity, challenged the wealth and power of the 13th century Catholic Church, so many were not supportive of this quickly growing movement. Many Franciscan friars and nuns were persecuted throughout Europe and beyond. Clare was a very effective leader of this burgeoning movement. She used letters to connect distant followers to the "home base" of the order in Umbria. Though she rarely left her cloister, she influenced major events in this period through her letters to followers, popes, and secular leaders. This is an example of her gentle, reassuring tone that played a large role in preserving the order in its formative decades.

The melody is a fantasia on the Irish jig tune "Road to Lisdoonvarna." I borrow heavily from one version (from the aural tradition) of this tune in the first half and the second half is all new material. This makes for a fine jig tune, but as a waltz, there is an earnest, passionate quality to it that illuminates the text.

Notes by Glenn McClure

Four Russian Peasant Songs "My profound emotion on reading the news of war (World War II), which aroused patriotic feelings and a sense of sadness at being so distant from my country, found some alleviation in the delight with which I steeped myself in Russian folk poems." Stravinsky wrote this in his autobiography, and Vera Stravinsky and Robert Craft confirmed the fact in their book *Stravinsky in Pictures and Documents*:

Although living on the shores of Lake Geneva during the war, Stravinsky identified with the struggle of the Russian people. His isolation from them made him even more conscious of his own Russian roots. He immersed himself in Russian folk literature and in Russian folk music. "With these songs Stravinsky 'destroyed the prerogatives of old-fashioned

song and lazy ethnography," wrote Russian composer and musicologist Boris Asafiev in his *A Book About Stravinsky*.

Among the most commonplace and mundane sources he found a music that was authentically Russian, and he gave it artistic shape without deforming or disguising its nature and origins. Neither in his titles nor in footnotes does he ever allude to whether a theme of his is his own invention or whether it is taken over from folk music. He apparently omitted this information intentionally. He wanted to demonstrate that it does not matter whether a composer invents his own themes or uses themes from elsewhere.

These songs were composed from 1914-1917. In 1954 he revised them and added the horns. In Russia these songs are called "platter" or "saucer" songs because of their connection with fortune-telling rituals practiced by peasants during Yuletide celebrations. In the ritual young women tried to discern when they would get married and whether wealth or poverty was in their future. The girls would put rings, earrings, and hair ribbons onto a covered saucer along with grain kernels and cinders. Then they sang the songs. With each song an object was taken from the plate. Whatever the song's text promised was seen as a prediction. The first three songs predict wealth. The fourth song predicts poverty and a miserable mate.

The music is a twentieth-century interpretation of folk music. Stravinsky does not idealize folklore. Paul Griffiths noted that these songs are "futurist photographs of something ancient."

Notes by Vadim Prokhorov

Translation:

Near the Savior's Church in Chigisy

Near the Savior's church in Chigisy across the Yauza River. Glory! Glory!

There the wealthy farmers live. Glory! Glory!

They rake up gold by the shovelful! Glory! Glory!

They gather up pure silver by the basketful. Glory! Glory!

Ovsen

Ovsen, Ovsen, Ovsen!

I'm hunting a black grouse. Ovsen, Ovsen, Ovsen! I'm hunting a black field grouse.

Ovsen, Ovsen, Ovsen! It hides under a bush, but I grab its tail. Ovsen! Its tail stuffed in my hand. Ovsen! Its tail stuffed in my hand a handful of money.

Ovsen, Ovsen, Ovsen, Ovsen, Ovsen!

The Pike

A pike came from Novgorod. Glory! It dragged its tail from the White Lake. Glory!

Its scales are of silver. Glory! They are gilded with gold. Glory! Its back is braided with pearls.

Glory! Its head is studded with pearls. Glory! And in place of its eyes are precious diamonds. Glory!

Fatso

Fatso ventured out into the turnip patch. Glory, glory, glory, glory, glory!

Out of Fatso burst out a pound of lice. Glory, glory, glory, glory, glory!

A pound of lice and a half-pound of fleas. Glory, glory, glory, glory, glory!

A Child Said

The text of this piece is by Walt Whitman.

A child said, "What is the grass?" fetching it to me with full hands,
How could I answer the child? For I do not know what it is anymore than he.

I guess the grass is itself a child, The handkerchief of the Lord,
A scented gift and remembrancer, And now it seems to me the beautiful uncut hair of graves.

This is the grass that grows wherever the land is, This the common air that bathes the globe.

I believe a leaf of grass is no less than the journey work of the stars.
The smallest sprout shows there is really no death.

I bequeath myself to the dirt, to grow from the grass I love,
If you want me again

Then look for me under your boot soles, under grass.

Canticle: In Remembrance

Commissioned by Ithaca College in memory of William McIver

Text:

What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justice, love, mercy, and walk humbly with thy God? Micah 6:8

Behold, I make all things new. Revelation 21:5

I know thy works. Behold I have set before thee an open door and no man can shut it. Revelation 3:8

Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.

They may rest from their labors. Their works do follow them. Revelation 14:13

The text of this piece is based upon three passages in the book of Revelation: Revelation 3:8, 14:13, and 21:5-6 and an Old Testament passage, Micah 6:8. The verse in Micah proclaims God's requirement for

man's walk here on earth. Although each verse in Revelation is surrounded by biblical prophecies, the passages combined form an image of the continuum upon which God places the good works of the individual believer. This scripture proclaimed together forms an image of the believer and his works passing through an open door which no man can shut.

In the life of a great teacher it portrays the mystery of his good works. The work of his hands is reproduced in the students who emulate him. All things are made new in the promise in the New Testament of a new body, a new heaven and a new earth. The works of the great teacher are also constantly reborn in the new works of his students. In this way, the finite nature of man is supplanted by the infinite nature of God.

The piece uses much word painting to describe the ripple effect of a teacher. Starting with three parts, it spreads to six. The center section begins with one voice, and again, ripples out to include six voices and the entire choir.

Nigra Sum

Translation: I am black and beautiful, daughter of Jerusalem. The king brought me into his chambers and spoke to me. "Rise and come with me." Winter is passed. The rains are over and gone. Flowers appear rising on earth. The time of renewal has come. Alleluia.

Amazing Grace

This setting by Francisco Núñez replaces the world "wretch" with child.

She Shall Have Music

This is from the "London Bridge" suite by Nick Page. This one involves a young lady in her bedroom imagining being on a horse. This is paired with London Bridge. At the end, the crescendo on the word "lady" is because, in Nick's subtext, the mother of the girl has come in at various intervals of her singing and playing and told her to go to bed. The soft singing is the girl's mild rebellion – singing under the cover. She is a bit upset with her mother. The growing "lady" within a piano context is as bold as she gets in being angry with her mother.

O Trenzinho was performed by Maria Guinand's treble ensemble. Trenzinho means "little Train." The text is by Catharina Santoro.

Text:

The beginning text is simply a sound imitating a train. Then the words say:

Hurry all. Let us all go to Grandma's house. The train goes up the hill. Oh! How eager we are to see each other, to kiss Grandma. How happy we are. We see from far away her colored skirt. The piece ends as the train comes to a stop.

Special thanks to Maria Guinand for inspiring this choir through the example of her choir and for providing the music for this piece.

Las Amarillas

Las Amarillas is in the southern Mexican style of the huapango. One of the distinguishing characteristics of the style is the "floating" downbeat, which can be felt most clearly in the Alto part. The downbeat is often a rest while the pulse that naturally falls in the middle of the bars is nudged aside by an eighth rest. The resulting effect is that of a rhythm whose downbeat keeps vanishing at just the point our ears would expect the primary emphasis to fall. Because of the "floating" downbeat, the huapango combines the single-minded drive of an ostinato with a sense of nimble-footed elasticity. Notes by Stephen Hatfield

Stephen Hatfield asks that this be performed with a "devil-may-care" festive attitude that prevents the precision from sounding clinical. We hope you listen with an attitude of fun as well. Enjoy!

Stephen Hatfield also says that it doesn't matter so much what the words mean as how they sound. However, for the curious, the text is:

The yellow birds fly from the cactus. No longer will the cardinals sing happily to the song, na na. Because the trees on the hillside have not come back to life For that the birds will either sing or crush their nests. You are small and beautiful and I love you just the way you are. You are like a little rose from the coast of Guerrero. Everybody has their own farewell, but there's none like this one. Four times five is twenty, three times seven is twenty-one.

Blessing is the Ithaca College Women's Chorale's signature piece. Set to music by Katie Moran Bart, this setting of the Irish Blessing sends all women leaving the group on their way with beauty. It is a piece that we love to sing together and with former members of this group.

ITHACA COLLEGE WOMEN'S CHORALE

Janet Galván, conductor

Elizabeth Swanson, graduate assistants

Soprano I

Malaina Beattie
Sonya Harper

Soprano I-II

Lauren Ash-Morgan
Sara Barasch
Cat Bennett
Victoria Benson
Diana Cioffari
Hope Darcey-Martin
Tiffany Desmond
Erika Eddy
Jennifer Hasselhan
Alison LaGarry
Stephanie Lauricella
Jilliann Law
Alexandra Loutsion
Donna Mathis
Sophia Miller
Lindsay Rider
Kiera Smialek
Sarah Tree
Kristin Triantafillou

Soprano II

Meghan Beattie
Krista Donough
Carrie Erving
Megan Hofmann
Allison Hooper
Amy Pratt
Lisa Spilde
Kacie Weaver

Soprano II – Alto I

Melanie Fishman
Andrea Hayden
Allison Holst-Grubbe
Kristina LaFever

Alto I

Kathryn Beneke
Greer Connor
Heather Curtis
Christine Dunn
Mary Edwards-Ransom
Megan Peppers
Erin Schubmehl
Kristin Zaryski

Alto I-II

Rebecca Francis
Theresa Johnson
Ana Liss
Yolanda Payne
Lindsay Rondeau
Marian Sunnergren
Lisa Zuccaro

Alto II

Natalie Andreoli
Laurel Carnes
Allison Dromgold
Meggan Frost
Erica Hardy
Shelly Helgeson
Kafi Kareem
Sarah Lewandowski
Elizabeth Swanson
Elysa Valentino
Naomi Williams

Piano Accompanists

Kristina LaFever
Megan Peppers
Kristin Zaryski
Liza Zuccaro